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THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL JOURNAL

Continuing "The Elementary School Teacher"

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CHOOSING A SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT

The Board of Education of the City of Chicago has asked a commission of nine representative citizens to canvass the country and recommend a candidate or a small number of candidates for the superintendency of schools. It is believed that such a special commission will be more impartial in its choice than it is possible for the Board itself to be in view of the complications through which all of the officers of the Board have passed in recent years.

At the first meeting of the commission the President of the Board made an address which presents so clear a statement

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WILLIAM SCOTT GRAY
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of the situation that it is worth repeating in full. It is as follows:

In the name of the school children of Chicago and their parents, I have to thank you. You have consented to co-operate in the selection of a Superintendent of our schools. You are about to render a great public service, with probably no small personal sacrifice. I have no desire to direct your thinking or in any sense to suggest a course of action. What I am about to say will be said solely for the purpose of giving you facts and information necessary for your guidance.

At this time the selection of a Superintendent of Schools is a matter of the highest importance to the City of Chicago. Our school system has outgrown the simple plan of organization provided by an old statute. With growth have come new problems, greater responsibilities and enlarged demands. To meet these, a new statute was passed by the State Legislature two years ago. This statute provides for a compact and efficient organization. Under the old law the Superintendent had only the powers of a head teacher. The new law gives him full recognition. It entrusts him with explicitly stated powers. It makes him in fact the educational director of the school system. It provides that he shall have a definite and extended term of office.

Not only the new law has enlarged the importance of the Superintendency. The development of the city has naturally operated to increase the responsibility of this office. It is today, in the number of people controlled and in the funds expended, one of the most important executive positions in the country.

The Superintendent of the Schools of Chicago is charged with organizing and executive tasks equal to, if not greater than, those of the manager of any great industrial plant. The school buildings are widely scattered; they are located in communities which differ in the character of their population, thus raising complex problems of adjustment and control.

Each school building is in charge of a principal who has considerable powers of discretion and large influence in his community. To establish a general policy of education and yet give play for the individual effort and initiative is part of the function of the new Superintendent. The teaching force is composed of individuals of varying degrees of training and ability. To so direct the teachers that the maximum of efficiency shall be attained by all is likewise part of the task which rests on the new Superintendent. A reorganization of the machinery of the central educational office is necessary. The Board of Education must be kept informed of the condition of the schools.

It will be part of the duty of the Superintendent to report on these conditions, to show what is being accomplished through the operation of the schools, and to devise plans and develop policies for the betterment of the school management.

What is needed, then, is a trained educator, a forceful executive, some one with an aptitude for organization who is accustomed to assume responsibility and to exercise power. Many of you are men of affairs, most of you have been called upon to pass on the fitness of candidates for positions requiring similar qualifications. You are, therefore, not acting in a new, if in a difficult, capacity.

You are asked to find candidates for this position, to enlist the services and advice of educational experts, and to use such other sources of information as may in your judgment lead to the wisest and best selection. You are asked not to regard your choice as limited in any way. Your candidates may be drawn from Chicago or elsewhere. Superior fitness for the office should be your only criterion. The Board is prepared to fix the compensation of the Superintendent at a level which will bring to the service of the city the most competent Superintendent to be found. It is desired that you report to the Board either a small number of candidates from which final choice can be made, or a single candidate may be suggested if one can be found who is your unanimous choice. It is hoped that you will find it practicable to report in detail the reasons which led to your choice. It is hoped also that you may report the range of your canvass so that the public may be informed as to the number and types of candidates considered.

The Board and the officers of the school system stand ready to supply you with any information which you may require for any phase of your work. The expense incident to the work you are about to undertake will, of course, be met by the Board.

AN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEWS AGENCY

Before "the armistice ruined the war" there flourished in New York City an agency for exchange of international educational news. This agency was a part of Mr. Creel's department and it rendered during its life some valuable service in bringing together the allied and neutral countries by helping them to compare views on educational matters.

The swan song of this bureau is a brief report of its doings and an urgent plea for a permanent agency of this type. So

important is the matter that we quote this final statement in full.

Eight hundred thousand in the United States, one hundred seventy-five thousand in Great Britain, one hundred fifty thousand in France, two hundred ten thousand in Germany, two hundred fifty thousand in Russia, one hundred thousand in Italy, one hundred thousand in China, one hundred seventy thousand in Japan (and so on through the list of nations). Such are these great standing armies of teachers-guardians of tomorrow.

It has been an objective of the Educational Division of the Foreign Press Bureau to try to reach these teachers through the press and to bind them together more closely in friendship and good-will. They represent a great International force hitherto quite unmobilized but united by multiple bonds of learned societies, of languages and literatures, and of more or less common methodology. Throughout the neutral and allied world enemy propagandists had circulated every conceivable distortion of our education and life and ideals. These needed to be counteracted by modest but accurate interpretations of our life, which however sought to avoid our tendencies toward superlatives and to allow facts to carry their own story. To effect this in the educational field, the program of an Educational Exchange was developed.

Each week there has gone abroad during the past year some articles on education, and since July or August there have been a half dozen such interpretations each week, as about one-tenth of the total material covering agriculture, labor, medicine, news, etc. These have been forwarded in the diplomatic pouch to some thirty-five foreign countries where our representatives, generally attachés of the Embassies, have received, translated and passed them on to the press of the country in question. Here they have either appeared in the public, the literary or the technical educational press. These articles have been written on request by leading educators all over the United States who have, with loyalty and great personal sacrifice of time, donated them to the cause of International good-will. These authors cover the best known names among our educators.

Further, the educational press of the United States has generously given permission to use their current articles and has further signified a readiness to accept the Exchange Service. This Exchange program was based on the idea that only as people have things in common can they co-operate. Basic among those things is knowledge about each other. Unfortunately, the teachers of the world know little about each other. The great mass of the

graded school teachers do not receive an adequate living wage—and they have had little chance for travel or study about other peoples. (In higher education conditions are not so bad internationally.) So while we asked our educators to interpret our educational system, and ideals and progress to others, we also asked foreign nations to interpret their country to us—feeling that we had much to learn from these older cultures. In England, in Spain and elsewhere, the Government has authorized a native educator to mobilize the writings of his people for us.

For the purpose of translating such articles, a large staff of volunteer translators have offered their services to the government without compensation.

Special requests cabled from certain countries have been met, and the articles, often illustrated with pictures of American school equipment and life, have gone by the next transport.

There is a great interest abroad in this sort of International Educational Entente, as evinced by correspondence conducted with the various embassies and legations and their governments. It is one of the educationally and internationally important discoveries of war effort that this sort of thing is basic—that in time of peace it has an even more vital rôle than in war. Conference with foreign leaders in various educational missions, which are coming hither frequently, have revealed their conviction that the governments of the world should, on the fallen ruins of secret diplomacy, initiate a type of diplomacy of brotherhood, with educational and scientific representatives in every nation, seeking ways through the exchange of ideas to further the good of each and all.

Foreign countries, and especially Latin America, are earnestly interested in our opportunities for professional study, and the opportunities that thus open to our graduate schools, through the spread of information about our institutions, will be most significant in the intellectual leadership of the next one or two decades.

Foreign representatives have urged that we undertake an international educational magazine—an international Bureau of Educational Information—a world Congress of Teachers, and many other challenging thoughts. But here are the teachers of the world—millions strong; they influence the ideas of tomorrow's citizens and leaders the world over; in their hands is the growth of liberal democracy and of international good-will. It is to be hoped that the warm reception accorded this work in thirty-five countries will point the way to the larger and permanent organization of this work, which will join the ideas and ideals and hearts and hands of the Teachers of the World.

TEACHERS' PENSIONS

The Carnegie Foundation has issued a report on teachers' pensions which is enough to arouse the pessimistic apprehensions of anyone who is not blindly devoted to the reckless ways which have been followed by pension plans in the past. There are very few plans which are sound. The following extract from the report shows how deficient have been the plans adopted in various cities and states.

The disbursements of the former New York City system, which was established in 1894, began to be larger than the receipts in 1910. The Teachers' Retirement Fund of New Jersey, established in 1896, required increased income in 1899, 1903, and 1906, and its solvency is still in question. The system in Porto Rico, established in 1898, was abandoned in 1905. The Boston system, established in 1900, encountered deficiencies in 1914. The Indianapolis fund, established in 1907, almost met financial difficulties in 1914. The Maryland fund, established in 1908, had to increase its resources in 1912 and 1914. The Virginia system, established in 1908, had to reduce its pensions as early as 1912. The Cincinnati fund, established in 1911, had to reduce its pensions in 1914. The Illinois system, established in 1915, encountered a legislative investigation in the same year. Large privileges, small resources, and the lack of adjustment between the two promise similar difficulties for numerous other systems.

The Carnegie Foundation itself is a conspicuous example of complete breakdown of a pension scheme which was not fully or wisely calculated out before it was launched.

All this experience shows that hasty action on pension schemes should not be taken by teachers' associations or other bodies which have not given careful study to the problems involved. The writer recently sat through a heated forenoon of discussion by a state teachers' association which was evidently at the highest tension on the matter. It was equally evident to an onlooker that the forensic display far surpassed general knowledge of the principles involved. The suggestion that came to his mind was that it would be much better to use the time of association meetings for other purposes and reduce

discussion of pensions to writing and print so that they may be characterized by study and a display of intelligence rather than by sentimental fervor and partisan temper. School teachers no less than other people need to be reminded from time to time that there are scientific principles which alone are safe guides of conduct in technical matters.

METHODS OF SUPERVISION

This issue contains an article on supervision which is so suggestive that editorial comment in addition to the article itself seems admissible.

First, it is suggestive in that it opens the way for other contributions from principals who have devised and practiced useful methods which are not widely known. Nothing will do more to put education on a professional footing than such reports as this. This Journal will welcome contributions of this type. They constitute legitimate members of the series on the duties of the school principal and at the same time they bring out the experiences of principals in practical service.

Second, the article shows how a system may be developed in a sphere where a system has been for the most part wholly lacking. Most principals and teachers think of supervision as a series of accidents. How often the teacher excuses a poor recitation seen by the supervisor on the ground that things did not seem to go well on that particular day! How often a supervisor goes away from the class wondering whether he has seen a typical performance! Here is a systematic arrangement which frankly looks for superior work and makes the conditions right for such work.

Third, supervision of the sort described in this article is specific and direct. There is no aimless wandering about the room on the part of the principal; no doubt on the part of the teacher. In an earlier editorial announcing the Indianapolis Reading Survey attention was drawn to the large possibilities

of development in the direction of specific surveys. So here we see the specific survey taken up in the well-supervised school through the co-operation of principal and teachers.

The editors of this Journal believe that there is a science and art of school supervision. They believe in system and directness of attack. They welcome contributions of the type represented by this article.

PLANNING FOR DEVELOPMENT

It is often complained by schoolmen that American communities do not keep superintendents and other supervisory officers in their positions long enough to permit effective reforms to be carried out. There is some ground for this complaint. But the answer which the community could usually make is that school officers seldom, if ever, outline their policies far enough ahead of the immediate present to permit the people of a city or town to judge whether or not it is worth while to retain the officer.

By way of contrast with the lack of foresight ordinarily exhibited we may quote in full a clipping from Decatur, Illinois. In spite of the purely local character of some of the items the program is repeated in full to show the kind of program which people like to have their school officials work out.

Other things being equal, the best schools, like the most successful business enterprises, are those which have a plan and an ideal and work towards its realization. Somebody must have imagination and vision; somebody must look ahead and see the schools as they are not, but as they ought to be. Only by such projection can real progress be made.

In the outline of achievements for the schools given here there is no mention made of anything chimerical, visionary, unworthy or needless. There is not an item in the plan that would not mean better educational opportunity for the children of Decatur. There is not one that is not paralleled in many cities which are known because of their good schools. Some of these plans ought to be realized within the next year or two; all of them are possible of realization before 1924 if the citizens of Decatur wish the city to become better as rapidly as it becomes bigger.

"1. Complete the new junior high school upon the site west of the Pugh school.

"2. Replace the Jackson Park School with a new building.

"3. Replace the Jasper School with a new building.

"4. Build such an addition to the high school as will provide the additional classrooms needed, adequate lunch room, a gymnasium available for students in the central junior high school as well as the high school, and room for the expansion of the commercial and domestic science departments, especially.

"5. Establish a free kindergarten in every elementary school.

"6. Provide continuation schools for all children out on work permits between the ages of 14 and 16. (If the law is changed to make the upper limit of the compulsory age 18, vocational school privileges should apply to all children up to that age.)

"7. Make summer schools free for all who want to attend.

"8. Provide for free textbooks in grades and high school.

"9. Endeavor to have one thousand pupils in the night schools, five or six in number, and to secure the active co-operation of all employes of labor in the city to insure the presence of every alien employe in classes that can give training in English and Citizenship.

"10. As soon as legislation will permit it, adopt a salary schedule that will enable Decatur to hold, as well as attract, the best teachers from the first grade to twelve, without imposing the necessity of a sacrifice upon these good ones who do stay.

"11. Establish at least six special classes, some for super-normal as well as for backward children.

"12. Provide for a program of health education that will get results. This will doubtless involve the employment of a full time school physician, two school nurses and a staff of trained teachers of physical education.

"13. Reduce the size of classes in the elementary schools, and particularly in the primary grades, and increase the efficiency of the work at this strategic point, through the services of a special supervisor of primary grades.

"14. Recognize the impossibility of a teacher teaching full time in a given grade and serving as principal of a building at the same time, and remedy the situation by employing at least four supervising principals, each having some forty teachers under him and giving his whole time to their supervision.

"15. Employ a director of home gardening or a head of the department of agriculture in the high school who shall be on duty twelve months out of the year and spend his vacation in directing the garden work of students and children of Decatur.

"16. Establish a bureau of educational measurement and research with a competent director in charge."

REQUEST FOR MATERIAL FROM A COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETY

The following letter has been sent to all members of the National Society for the Study of Education. All school officers, even if they are not reached through that channel, can render a service to education by replying to the request for information and by giving as much publicity as possible to this letter. It is expected that the work of the Committee will continue after the preliminary report has been rendered at the February meeting of the Society. Replies will accordingly be welcome even after February.

At the meeting of the National Society for the Study of Education held at Atlantic City a committee was appointed to develop methods of co-operative work on the curriculum.

There are in existence in many school systems valuable lesson materials which have never been published in textbooks. For example, there are lesson outlines based on material not commonly in the hands of teachers; there are lessons in local geography, and lessons describing in a very useful way local industries. These will often suggest lines of work which may be taken up in other regions where exact imitation would not be profitable. There are special devices which contribute to the success of instruction such as plans for supervised study or methods of correlating school subjects.

There are also critical revisions of textbooks. Sometimes these consist in rearrangements of the chapters when the book is used for class work. Sometimes the revision goes further and omits certain chapters, using only a part of the book; or adds sections from collateral or supplementary books.

If the experiences of teachers could be collected and exchanged, there would undoubtedly result a general interest in the critical revision and enlargement of the materials of instruction. This in turn would stimulate

teachers who now accept textbooks as they find them to make new materials for their classes and to improve the familiar material by better organization.

A number of schools have found it possible to set aside some time of teachers for the making of new material to be used in classrooms. In several cases boards of education have consented to the release of strong teachers for a fraction of their time in order that they might prepare reading lessons about the history or natural resources of the region or like matters. Such arrangements seem legitimate when it is recognized that the creation of new material to be used in classroom instruction is very important at this time when the rapid progress of events justifies the demand for the introduction of much that is new into the curriculum of schools.

The Committee of the National Society has decided this year to devote its whole attention to the curriculum in grades seven to nine. What is wanted is:

1. Reports in detail on what is now being done in these grades with references to the books and materials used.

2. Special reports on original work being done by individual teachers. This should be given when possible in the form of full accounts of the lessons, giving content and methods.

3. Reports of plans for organizing correlated courses for these grades.

The Committee is especially interested in getting material which is being used for instruction in community and national life.

Members of the Society are asked to co-operate by supplying directly information of the type described above and also by sending to the Chairman the addresses of teachers or school officers who are likely to be able and willing to co-operate with the Committee.

The results of the work of the Committee will be printed in yearbooks of the Society or other appropriate channels and will be supplied to all who co-operate in collecting material.

Very truly yours,

COMMITTEE ON THE MATERIALS OF INSTRUCTION

W. C. Bagley	L. D. Coffman	H. C. Morrison
J. C. Brown	E. P. Cubberley	G. D. Strayer
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